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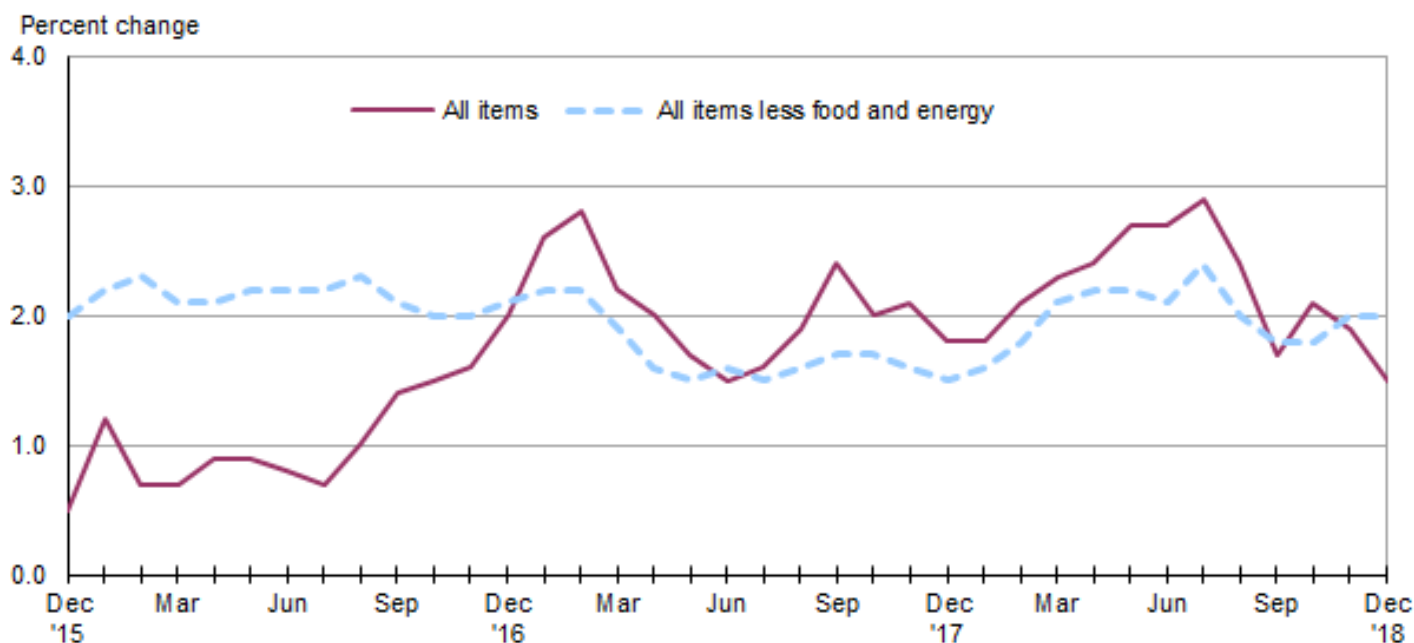
Consumer Price Index, South Region – December 2018

Prices in the South down 0.5 percent over the month; up 1.5 percent over the year

The Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) for the South declined 0.5 percent in December, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. The energy index (-6.0 percent) and the all items less food and energy index (-0.1 percent) contributed to the decrease. The food index rose 0.4 percent in December. (Data in this report are not seasonally adjusted. Accordingly, month-to-month changes reflect the impact of seasonal influences.)

The all items CPI-U for the South increased 1.5 percent for the 12 months ending December, compared to a 1.9-percent increase for the period ending November. Since December 2017, the all items less food and energy index advanced 2.0 percent and the food index rose 1.5 percent. The energy index declined 2.8 percent over the last 12 months; this was its first 12-month decline since the period ending September 2016. (See [chart 1](#) and [table 1](#).)

Chart 1. Over-the-year percent change in CPI-U, South region, December 2015–December 2018



Food

The food index rose 0.4 percent in December, reflecting over-the-month increases in the food away from home index (0.6 percent) and the food at home index (0.3 percent).

The food index increased 1.5 percent since December 2017, led by a 2.5-percent increase in the food away from home index. Over the year, the food at home index rose 0.6 percent.

Energy

The energy index declined 6.0 percent in December, fueled by a 12.5-percent decrease in the gasoline index. The electricity and the utility (piped) gas service indexes rose in December, up 1.1 and 3.1 percent respectively.

From December 2017—December 2018, the energy index fell 2.8 percent, after rising 2.2 percent for the 12 month period ending November. The gasoline index declined 6.7 percent for the 12 months ending December, and the utility (piped) gas service index declined 1.6 percent. The electricity index rose 1.5 percent over the last 12 months.

All items less food and energy

The index for all items less food and energy inched down 0.1 percent in December, as several indexes had decreases; most notably, a seasonal decline in the apparel index (-3.8 percent).

Since December 2017, the index for all items less food and energy advanced 2.0 percent. The shelter index contributed to the increase, up 2.7 percent.

Geographic divisions

Additional price indexes are now available for the three divisions of the South. Over the month, the all items CPI-U declined 0.9 percent in the East South Central division. The all items index also declined in the West South Central division (-0.7 percent) and in the South Atlantic division (-0.4 percent).

Over the year, the all items index advanced 2.0 percent in the South Atlantic division. The all items index rose 1.0 percent in the West South Central division and 0.9 percent in the East South Central division.

Table A. South region CPI-U 1-month and 12-month percent changes, all items index, not seasonally adjusted

Month	2014		2015		2016		2017		2018	
	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month	1-month	12-month
January.....	0.3	1.7	-0.7	-0.4	0.0	1.2	0.5	2.6	0.5	1.8
February.....	0.4	1.2	0.5	-0.3	0.1	0.7	0.2	2.8	0.6	2.1
March.....	0.6	1.5	0.6	-0.3	0.6	0.7	0.0	2.2	0.2	2.3
April.....	0.5	2.3	0.3	-0.6	0.4	0.9	0.2	2.0	0.4	2.4
May.....	0.2	2.4	0.4	-0.4	0.4	0.9	0.0	1.7	0.3	2.7
June.....	0.2	2.3	0.5	-0.1	0.4	0.8	0.2	1.5	0.2	2.7
July.....	-0.1	2.0	-0.1	-0.1	-0.2	0.7	-0.2	1.6	0.0	2.9
August.....	-0.2	1.7	-0.2	-0.2	0.1	1.0	0.4	1.9	-0.1	2.4
September.....	0.1	1.7	-0.2	-0.4	0.2	1.4	0.7	2.4	0.0	1.7
October.....	-0.3	1.6	0.0	-0.1	0.1	1.5	-0.2	2.0	0.2	2.1
November.....	-0.6	1.3	-0.2	0.3	-0.1	1.6	-0.1	2.1	-0.3	1.9
December.....	-0.6	0.6	-0.4	0.5	0.1	2.0	-0.1	1.8	-0.5	1.5

The Consumer Price Index for January 2019 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, February 13, 2019.

Technical Note

The Consumer Price Index (CPI) is a measure of the average change in prices over time in a fixed market basket of goods and services. The Bureau of Labor Statistics publishes CPIs for two population groups: (1) a CPI for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U) which covers approximately 93 percent of the total population and (2) a CPI for Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers (CPI-W) which covers 29 percent of the total population. The CPI-U includes, in addition to wage earners and clerical workers, groups such as professional, managerial, and technical workers, the self-employed, short-term workers, the unemployed, and retirees and others not in the labor force.

The CPI is based on prices of food, clothing, shelter, and fuels, transportation fares, charges for doctors' and dentists' services, drugs, and the other goods and services that people buy for day-to-day living. Each month, prices are collected in 75 urban areas across the country from about 5,000 housing units and approximately 22,000 retail establishments—department stores, supermarkets, hospitals, filling stations, and other types of stores and service establishments. All taxes directly associated with the purchase and use of items are included in the index.

The index measures price changes from a designated reference date (1982-84) that equals 100.0. An increase of 16.5 percent, for example, is shown as 116.5. This change can also be expressed in dollars as follows: the price of a base period "market basket" of goods and services in the CPI has risen from \$10 in 1982-84 to \$11.65. For further details see the CPI home page on the Internet at www.bls.gov/cpi and the BLS Handbook of Methods, Chapter 17, The Consumer Price Index, available on the Internet at www.bls.gov/opub/hom/pdf/homch17.pdf.

In calculating the index, price changes for the various items in each location are averaged together with weights that represent their importance in the spending of the appropriate population group. Local data are then combined to obtain a U.S. city average. Because the sample size of a local area is smaller, the local area index is subject to substantially more sampling and other measurement error than the national index. In addition, local indexes are not adjusted for seasonal influences. As a result, local area indexes show greater volatility than the national index, although their long-term trends are quite similar. **NOTE: Area indexes do not measure differences in the level of prices between cities; they only measure the average change in prices for each area since the base period.**

The **South region** is comprised of Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.

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Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted)

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2017	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018
Expenditure category						
All Items.....	244.163	243.484	242.150	1.5	-0.8	-0.5
All items (December 1977=100).....	396.066	394.964	392.801	-	-	-
Food and beverages	251.239	251.631	252.613	1.5	0.5	0.4
Food	252.466	252.744	253.875	1.5	0.6	0.4
Food at home	238.189	238.032	238.833	0.6	0.3	0.3
Cereal and bakery products	277.865	278.637	281.753	2.0	1.4	1.1
Meats, poultry, fish, and eggs.....	242.710	242.231	241.889	-0.7	-0.3	-0.1
Dairy and related products	218.877	220.979	221.557	0.5	1.2	0.3
Fruits and vegetables	285.141	285.236	287.469	1.5	0.8	0.8
Nonalcoholic beverages and beverage materials.....	167.430	165.199	166.687	1.4	-0.4	0.9
Other food at home	210.175	210.312	209.911	0.2	-0.1	-0.2
Food away from home.....	276.530	277.422	279.035	2.5	0.9	0.6
Alcoholic beverages	233.744	235.796	234.608	1.6	0.4	-0.5
Housing	238.989	239.757	240.366	2.6	0.6	0.3
Shelter	275.920	276.653	276.993	2.7	0.4	0.1
Rent of primary residence	288.276	289.481	289.885	3.1	0.6	0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of residences(1).....	277.819	278.984	279.342	2.7	0.5	0.1
Owners' equiv. rent of primary residence(1)	277.817	278.980	279.337	2.7	0.5	0.1
Fuels and utilities.....	235.374	237.051	239.326	1.8	1.7	1.0
Household energy	188.748	189.242	191.605	1.0	1.5	1.2
Energy services.....	188.647	189.142	191.766	1.1	1.7	1.4
Electricity	187.500	187.395	189.528	1.5	1.1	1.1
Utility (piped) gas service	180.423	185.026	190.832	-1.6	5.8	3.1
Household furnishings and operations	121.955	122.283	122.739	2.5	0.6	0.4
Apparel	137.831	134.732	129.644	0.7	-5.9	-3.8
Transportation	214.437	209.816	203.286	-0.2	-5.2	-3.1
Private transportation	213.524	208.661	202.276	0.0	-5.3	-3.1
New and used motor vehicles(2).....	101.108	101.541	101.725	0.8	0.6	0.2
New vehicles	152.485	152.461	152.857	0.2	0.2	0.3
New cars and trucks(2)(3).....	103.821	103.811	104.081	0.2	0.3	0.3
New cars(3).....	152.092	152.319	152.708	0.8	0.4	0.3
Used cars and trucks.....	137.906	139.751	139.665	1.7	1.3	-0.1
Motor fuel	242.376	220.347	193.275	-6.3	-20.3	-12.3
Gasoline (all types).....	240.989	218.687	191.445	-6.7	-20.6	-12.5
Unleaded regular(3)	235.688	213.238	185.923	-7.0	-21.1	-12.8
Unleaded midgrade(3)(4)	263.006	242.498	217.180	-5.1	-17.4	-10.4
Unleaded premium(3).....	259.851	241.205	217.689	-4.4	-16.2	-9.7
Motor vehicle insurance(5).....	956.145	957.014	957.676	6.0	0.2	0.1
Medical care	461.815	464.243	463.428	1.5	0.3	-0.2
Medical care commodities.....	360.565	360.575	355.052	-4.0	-1.5	-1.5
Medical care services.....	495.862	499.130	499.967	2.9	0.8	0.2
Professional services	363.710	364.146	364.120	1.6	0.1	0.0
Recreation(2).....	118.512	119.058	119.452	2.3	0.8	0.3
Education and communication(2).....	133.319	132.510	132.218	-0.4	-0.8	-0.2
Tuition, other school fees, and child care(5) ..	1,327.097	1,326.933	1,326.980	1.6	0.0	0.0
Other goods and services	428.279	429.039	427.225	1.0	-0.2	-0.4
Commodity and service group						
All Items.....	244.163	243.484	242.150	1.5	-0.8	-0.5
Commodities	185.781	183.621	180.668	-0.1	-2.8	-1.6

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 1. Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers (CPI-U): Indexes and percent changes for selected periods South (1982-84=100 unless otherwise noted) - Continued

Item and Group	Indexes			Percent change from-		
	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018	Dec. 2018	Dec. 2017	Oct. 2018	Nov. 2018
Commodities less food and beverages	154.344	151.405	147.233	-1.0	-4.6	-2.8
Nondurables less food and beverages	207.688	200.035	189.494	-2.4	-8.8	-5.3
Nondurables less food, beverages, and apparel	250.669	240.410	226.703	-3.2	-9.6	-5.7
Durables	106.785	107.068	107.268	0.5	0.5	0.2
Services	302.771	303.679	304.088	2.6	0.4	0.1
Rent of shelter(1)	283.298	284.049	284.405	2.7	0.4	0.1
Transportation services	360.639	361.090	359.031	3.2	-0.4	-0.6
Other services	343.476	343.575	343.108	1.3	-0.1	-0.1
Special aggregate indexes						
All items less medical care	232.252	231.423	230.069	1.5	-0.9	-0.6
All items less food	242.623	241.803	240.105	1.5	-1.0	-0.7
All items less shelter	232.764	231.548	229.578	1.0	-1.4	-0.9
Commodities less food	156.824	153.980	149.854	-0.9	-4.4	-2.7
Nondurables	228.536	224.556	219.277	-0.4	-4.1	-2.4
Nondurables less food	208.991	201.841	191.785	-2.1	-8.2	-5.0
Nondurables less food and apparel	248.142	238.887	226.216	-2.9	-8.8	-5.3
Services less rent of shelter(1)	336.714	337.843	338.331	2.4	0.5	0.1
Services less medical care services	285.292	286.011	286.383	2.5	0.4	0.1
Energy	210.142	199.670	187.659	-2.8	-10.7	-6.0
All items less energy	248.760	249.187	249.057	1.9	0.1	-0.1
All items less food and energy	248.518	248.971	248.628	2.0	0.0	-0.1
Commodities less food and energy commodities	146.255	146.050	145.102	0.1	-0.8	-0.6
Energy commodities	246.281	224.294	197.057	-6.2	-20.0	-12.1
Services less energy services	314.836	315.788	315.952	2.7	0.4	0.1

Footnotes

(1) Indexes on a December 1982=100 base.

(2) Indexes on a December 1997=100 base.

(3) Special index based on a substantially smaller sample.

(4) Indexes on a December 1993=100 base.

(5) Indexes on a December 1977=100 base.

- Data not available.

Regions defined as the four Census regions. South includes Alabama, Arkansas, Delaware, District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, and West Virginia.